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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.



THE NRO STAFF

October 27, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. SONNENFELDT, NSC

SUBJECT: Paper by Amrom Katz

Mr. Amrom Katz asked me to forward a copy of his letter to Ray Cline with attachment to you. If this office can be of further assistance please contact me.

[REDACTED]
HEROLD S. COYLE, JR.
Major, USAF
Assistant Deputy Director
for Plans and Policy

1 Attachment
Ltr to Mr. Cline
[REDACTED] (6287-72)

[REDACTED]

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WASHINGTON, D.C.



THE NRO STAFF

October 27, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. MARTIN, OST

SUBJECT: Paper by Amrom Katz

Mr. Amrom Katz asked me to forward a copy of his letter to Ray Cline, with attachment, to you. Mr. Katz said that George Smith also suggested that you might be interested in this paper. If we can be of any further assistance please contact us.

[REDACTED]
HAROLD S. COYLE, JR.
Major, USAF
Assistant Deputy Director
for Plans and Policy

1 Attachment
Ltr to Mr. Cline
[REDACTED] 16287-72)

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Honorable Ray Cline
Department of State (INR)
Washington D.C.

2 OCT 1972

Dear Ray:

If even a fraction of what I'm reading in the press about the U. S.-S. U. wheat deal is correct, another (not altogether bad) rap is due the intelligence community. I refer here principally to (the allegation re) our not knowing early enough that the Soviet wheat crop was going to come up short.

You will remember, I'm sure, that I talked to you about solutions to this type of problem ten years ago (when you were at the agency and I was at RAND). I proposed "that we begin at once to study the utilization of photographic satellites of varied type, in conjunction with meteorological satellites, to make estimates of food production in countries whose area and whose data are by and large inaccessible to us."

By now we are well into the second decade of successful and productive photographic satellite operations. Our interests are broad. The applications of these tools are not as limited as our present uses. All that is needed is for the community, and its masters outside the community, to get on the ball.

As you probably know, after I made the suggestion the agency started an activity with a little company in Calif, directed toward estimating wheat production in the Dakotas from aerial photography. My understanding is that the project was successful. But its extension to foreign areas, using satellite derived data, is still missing.

Clearly forecasting food production in areas such as the S. U. and the P. R. C. can furnish us a political lever, or a handle to one. Unless everyone else feels that we don't need any more levers, we'd better get about fixing this. You certainly don't want a copy of this letter in another few years!

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Appended are:

1. A Novel Use for Reconnaissance - Dec 1, 1962
2. China Farming Seen on the Road to Recovery - LA Times, Mar 10, 1963
3. Russ Harvests Rots in Fields - SF Examiner - Sep 18, 1962
4. Nixon Could Have Held Out for Better Deal - Joseph Kraft, LA Times, Sep 24, 1972

I would add one final word. All the data and observation in the articles about Soviet harvests could be verified, if it were current, by current collection systems, which are much better than I dared dream 10 years ago.

Alas! We have the technology, but technology alone doesn't yield solutions automatically. Even a shot gun needs aiming.

This letter is written at the Office of Special Projects, Secretary of the Air Force (SA7SP-6) where I am a consultant, and where I can receive classified mail.

Sincerely,



AMBION H. KATZ

CC: John McInnes
Sy Weiss
Andy Marshall

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